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(71) Applicant: Curt G. Joa, Inc.
Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin 53085-0903 (US)

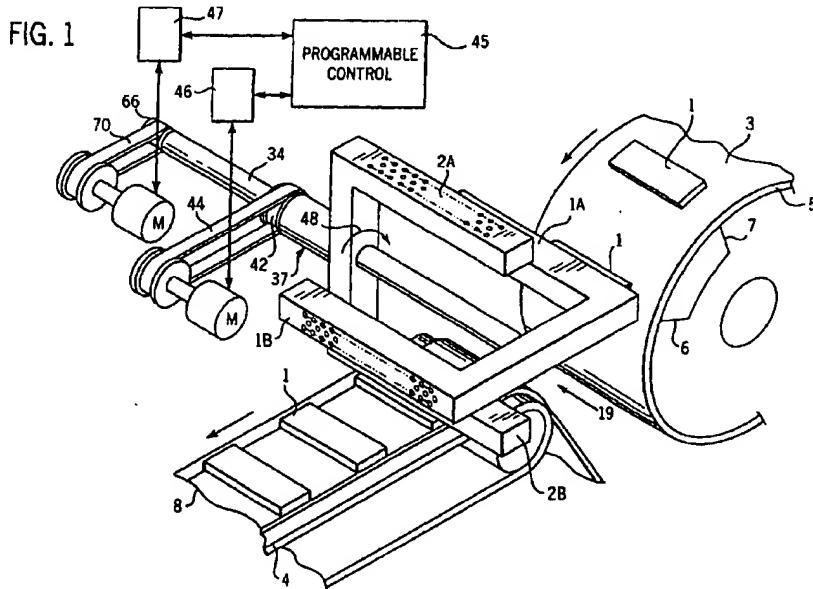
(72) Inventor: Meyer, Thomas C.
Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin 53020 (US)

(74) Representative: MacGregor, Gordon
Eric Potter Clarkson,
Park View House,
58 The Ropewalk
Nottingham NG1 5DD (GB)

(54) Device for altering the spacing between conveyed articles

(57) Articles being conveyed on a source conveyor belt with uniform spacing between them are deposited on a receiving conveyor belt with a different uniform spacing between them utilizing a device that has one or more transfer units mounted for being driven rotationally about a common axis, each transfer unit having axially extending article pickup members which all rotate or orbit in the same circular path for gripping successive articles being presented on the source conveyor and transferring the articles to the receiving conveyor. The

transfer units are driven rotationally with individual servomotors which are controlled to accelerate and decelerate cyclically such that the article pickup members arrive at the source conveyor or moving at the same linear speed as the source conveyor to pickup an article and arrive at the receiving conveyor moving linearly at the same speed as the receiving conveyor to deposit the article without relative motion between the pickup members and the conveyors while picking up and while depositing the articles.



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

EP 97 30 3982

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)
X	CH 678 616 A (SIG) 15 October 1991 * the whole document *	1,3,4,11	B65G47/84 B65G47/32 A61F13/15
Y	---	2,5-9	
A	---	10	
Y	WO 95 19752 A (KIMBERLY-CLARK CORP.) 27 July 1995 * page 7, line 7 - page 12, line 17: figures 1-5 *	2,5-9	
A	---	10	
A,D	US 4 726 876 A (J.E. TOMSOVIC JR.) 23 February 1988 * column 9, line 9-36; figure 1 *	2	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6)
			B65G A61F
<p>The present search report has been drawn up for all claims</p>			
Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner	
THE HAGUE	22 June 1998	Grentzius, W	
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document			